

# Living the Legacy

Defining Priorities in Life



# Defining Priorities

“...something given or meriting attention before competing alternatives...”

- Webster's Dictionary

# The Context of the “Shema”

- <sup>1</sup> These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,
- <sup>2</sup> so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.
- <sup>3</sup> Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you.

(Deuteronomy 6:1-3)

# God's Fourfold Purpose

1. So that we and our children may fear God.
2. So that we may enjoy long life.
3. So that it may go well with us.
4. And that we may increase greatly.

# The “Shema”

- 4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
- 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
- 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.
- 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.
- 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.
- 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

# Priorities in the “Shema”

1. Hearing God’s Truth  
(*“Hear, O Israel...”*)
2. Loving God  
(*“Love the Lord...”*)
3. Building Families  
(*“Impress them on your children...”*)
4. Changing Communities  
(*“...your houses and your gates...”*)

Priority 3:  
**Building Families**

“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

(Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

# Building Families

## Four Principles of Change:

1. Change Starts with Me.
2. Truth is Learned.
3. There is Power in Congruence.
4. Change is Measured Daily.

# Change Starts with Me

- Change starts with the heart.
- Nothing can change us but the Word.

“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.”  
(Deuteronomy 6:6)

# Change Starts with Me

- Change Starts in the Heart:

In Old Testament physiology the heart (*levav, lev*) was considered the seat of the mind or intellect, so that one could think with one's heart.

# Change Starts with Me

- Change starts with the inner acceptance of God's Word.

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”

(Psalm 119:9-11)

# Change Starts with Me

- “Heads First Discipleship”
- Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

(Matthew 28:18-20)

# Truth is Learned

- Change is rarely a gift — it is learned.
- “Impressus” — to apply with pressure so as to imprint.

“Impress them  
on your  
children.”  
(Deuteronomy 6:7)

# Truth is Learned

“I get many letters from you parents about your children. You want to know why we people up here in Princeton can't make more out of them and do more for them. Let me tell you the reason we can't. It may shock you just a little, but I am not trying to be rude. The reason is that they are your sons and reared in your homes. They have absorbed the ideals of your homes. You have formed and fashioned them. They are your sons. In those malleable, moldable years of their lives you have forever left your imprint upon them.” — Woodrow Wilson

# Truth is Learned

Truth should be communicated:

1. Diligently
2. Accurately
3. Repeatedly
4. Naturally
5. Personally

# Power in Congruence

- Congruence is the state of agreement.
- The inner and outer life of families should be congruent.

“Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road...”

(Deuteronomy 6:7)

# Power in Congruence

“We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done...So the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.”

(Psalm 78:4-6)

# Change is Measured Daily

- There is power in the Prayer of Examine.
- How do we start and end our days?

“Talk about them... when you lie down and when you get up”  
(Deuteronomy 6:7)

# Change is Measured Daily

“In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.” (Psalm 5:3)

“Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.” (Psalm 55:17)

# Building Families

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